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A
S E R M O N

OF THE

Education of Children,

Preach'd before the

RIGHT HONOURABLE


THE

L O R D M A Y O R,

A N D

Court of Aldermen,

A T

GUILD-HALL CHAPEL,

On SUNDAY, Novemb. 1. 1696.

By WILLIAM FLEETWOOD, Chaplain in
Ordinary to His MAJESTY.

L O N D O N,

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TO THE
INHABITANTS
OF THE
United Parishes
OF
S. AUSTIN and S. FAITH.



Having frequently intended with my self, something of this Nature, for Your particular Use and Service, to whom, You know, I am more immediately related; It was the easier to me, to comply with Their Desires who were willing to have this Discourse publish'd; because I knew I should thereby satisfy in part my own Intentions and Design of doing You good, in this Instance: and therefore though it be now Common, yet I desire You earnestly to make it more particularly Yours, by a close Application of it to Your selves.

I can't tell how a Minister can promise himself any Success in his Endeavours, if the Parents will not believe themselves obliged (as certainly they are by God's Commands) to educate their Children well, and bring them up in the Fear and Nurture of the Lord; and by their Care at home in private, fit them for those farther Instructions they

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are to receive in publick, at the appointed Opportunities. They are to sow the Seeds of Christs Religion in the Childrens Minds, and He must wisely cultivate, improve, and nourish them; They are to lay the first Foundations in their Hearts, and He must build thereon, as God enables him.

That this might not be a Work of Difficulty, either to Parents or to Children, nor either of them left at an Uncertainty, the One of Teaching, and the Other of Learning, what they ought, the Church in Her great Wisdom hath collected in Her Catechism, a short, but full and comprehensive, Summary of whatsoever a Christian is to believe and practise to his Soul's Health, which all her Children are to learn, remember, and consider, according to their Age and Understanding. This is delivered in so clear a Method, in Words and Sense so easie and intelligible, that it is not above a very mean Capacity; and yet the Matter is so solid and substantial, that it is fit for the strongest Understanding; the oldest Christian in the World need know no more, than what he is to learn there in his Youth, though he will know it better and more fully, the longer he considers it; so that the Parent, whilst he is instructing the Children in it, will be himself a gainful Learner; more and more edified, and grow continually in the Knowledge of his Faith and Duty.

The Neglect of this prescrib'd Course, has been one great Occasion, I believe, of that wide Difference there appears of Private Peoples Judgments and Opinions in Matters of Religion; they have taken in different Principles in their Youth, and therefore as their Age advanc'd, have drawn different Conclusions from them, the Effects of which have been exceedingly mischievous. I do therefore advise and desire you all to teach your Children this judicious, sound, and truly Christian Catechism, that savours nothing

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thing of a Party or private Spirit, but is what they may, and must, depend upon to their Lives end.

When this good Ground-work is well laid, you may with much more Ease, form and fashion them to Vertue and Religion, by putting them in mind of the Covenant they have made with God in Baptism, by which they stand oblig'd to give themselves entirely up to Christ; to look upon him as their only Lord and Law-Giver, their Saviour and their Judge; to believe whatever he reveals, and to fulfil whatever he commands. There also you will find the two Tables that contain their Duty towards God and towards their Neighbour, and both of them explained with the clearest Brevity that can be found, from whence you are, to take occasion of exciting them to a most diligent Performance of them, as also to rebuke and punish the Neglect, or the Transgression of them. There also they will learn the Lord's Prayer, the Prayer that Christ himself, the Son of God, (who knew the Father's Will, and Man's Necessities the best of all Men living) taught his Followers to use; and therefore it is such, you may be sure, as is best fitted for our Purpose, and such as is, both for the Matter and the Manner, acceptable to God the Father. After this follows a short but full Account of the two Sacraments, of Baptism, and the Lord's Supper; by which they learn the Manner how they themselves (and all true Christians ever since our Saviour's Institution of it) were initiated into Christ's Religion, namely by being baptized in Water, in the Name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, according to Christ's Command, explain'd by the Universal Practice of the Church; insomuch that they who have at any time denied or refused the Matter and the Form of this Sacrament, have not been accounted Christians. Here they see also what is signified by being thus baptized in Water, namely, the dying unto Sin, and living a-new to Righteousness, i. e. the repenting of, and forsaking all their

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past Sins, and living for the time to come, a Righteous and a Holy Life, which is also the Meaning of becoming a New Man, a New Creature, a Regenerate Person, and the like, all which is engag'd for, by every one at his Baptism, and is to be remembred, and perform'd for ever after. Here, lastly, they will come to see the End of the Institution of the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, the Cause and Purpose of its being ordained, namely, For the continual Remembrance of the Sacrifice of the Death of Christ, and of the Benefits which we receive thereby, i. e. to put them constantly in mind, that Christ the Lord was crucified upon the Cross; that this his Death was an attoning, expiatory Sacrifice, and accepted by God as such; that for its Sake and Merit his Anger is appeas'd, he is now reconcileable to all that will repent them of their Sins, and forsake them, and obey the Gospel; he will forgive them the Penalty they had incur'd, and will moreover crown them in the World to come with Everlasting Happiness. The Remembrance of this salutary Death and Sacrifice, and the great Benefits deriv'd to us from and by it, is the End of this Sacrament's being instituted by Christ: and therefore to answer the End of this Institution, they must come to the Sacrament; and when they come, the Bread broken is to remind them of the Body of Christ, torn and suffering on the Cross; and the Wine poured out is to remind them of the Blood of Christ that was there shed; and then they are to call to mind the inexpressible Benefits of this Death, the Pardon and Forgiveness of all the Sins which they repent of and forsake; the Hope and good Assurance of which Pardon, and Peace, and God's Favour, is as much the Life, the Strength and Comfort of the Soul, as Bread and Wine are the Support and Comfort of the Body.

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Upon this Knowledge of the End of the Institution, and of the Benefits that we receive by Christ's Death, it remains only that the young ones be acquainted with the Preparation that is necessary to their coming to the Lord's Supper, which they will find in the Answer to the last Question of the Catechism, which contains the whole of what they are to do. They are to examine themselves, whether they repent them truly of their former Sins, whether they steadfastly purpose to lead a new and better Life for the time to come— whether they have a lively Faith in God's Mercy, through Christ, i. e. Whether they verily believe that God was so exceeding Merciful and Gracious to Mankind, that for the Sake of Christ's Obedience, Death and Sufferings, he will certainly forgive the Sins of such as shall repent and leave them, and whether in full perswasion of this Mercy and these Gracious Promises, they set about Repentance: Whether they thankfully remember Christ's Death, i. e. Whether upon the consideration and remembrance of the mighty and amazing Miseries to which their Sins exposed them, and from which the Death of Christ alone has freed them, they do not call to mind this great Deliverance with the greatest Joy and Thankfulness, and bless and magnifie the Name of God who hath wrought this wondrous Redemption for them by the Death of Christ, his dear and only begotten Son. And Lastly, whether they are in Charity with all Men.

This is the Preparation (and all the Preparation) that is necessary to the coming to the Lord's Supper. And if People would be content to learn, wherein this Duty consists, in the shortest, plainest, and the surest Method, they would go no farther than the Church-Catechism; or if a little farther, it should be but to the Communion-Service, in which they will be sure to find all that is needful or convenient for them to know or do, before, and at, and after this Holy Sacrament.

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I have neither Authority nor Intention to discommend or disallow the use of other Books that treat of these Matters; but you will take it on my Word, I hope, that the shortest, and the plainest Rules of Direction are still the best; that whereinsoever other Books differ from this, they are not to be depended on: And that multiplicity of Books is apt to beget Confusion. As far therefore as you will let my Judgment weigh with you, I recommend it to your Care, that you let the Church Catechism be the Ground and Foundation of what your Children are to know of the Christian Religion; and that other good Books be call'd in, as Helps to their Devotion only, or to explain the Particulars contain'd therein, if they be difficult.

Whilst you are teaching, and your Children learning, all these Things, you must be sure, of all Things in the World, to go before them with a good Example; that is, to recommend, impress, and make your Lessons Credible. They will understand, believe, and practice better, if they see you live as you teach them to live. Let them know you pray to God constantly with your Family; that you love and exercise Truth, and Honesty, and Justice in all your Dealings; let them hear and see you chide your Servants, and Dependents, for every Lye they tell, and every Fraud and Falshood they are guilty of: let them never hear you swear, or curse, or speak any Thing disrespectfully of God, or Providence, or Holy Scriptures, or any thing of Religion; and they will then believe you are in earnest, and be more careful of doing as you bid them, and more fearful of offending. Let them see you go your self to Church upon the Lord's Day, and as many of the Family as can be spar'd, with your Convenience, and there behave themselves as becomes the Servants of God in his own House and more immediate Presence: And let them never see, even in the after Part of that good Day, any thing Light Extravagant, or Rude, but something of Respect and Honour
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shewn to the good Exercises that are over, and to the Day devoted by the Church of Christ to God's Service. Away with that severe, sullen, morose Religion, with which some Judaizing and mistaken Christians pass that Day on one Hand, and that prophane, contemptuous, court-like Observation of it on the other; but let a decent, Christian, and good natur'd Carriage, temper these Extreams; that your Children may neither dread the approach of Sunday above other Days, nor yet long for it, as a Day of Sloth and Idleness.

I hope I may, without Offence, take this Occasion to desire such of the Separation as are within my Parish, to take all Care they can, that both their Children and their Servants go along with them to the Places where they serve God themselves, or to some other certainly, and require an Account of their so doing, that the Liberty of absenting themselves from their Parish-Churches, indulg'd to them by Man's Law, be not turn'd to the Libertinism of serving God no where, and Irreligion and Prophaneness find those People whom the Church looses. We must indeed, on all sides, be solicitous lest he who sows Division amongst us, reap the Fruits thereof, and be the greatest Gainer; of this, in earnest, there was never greater need than now, for Christianity and good Morality had never more, or greater Enemies; and therefore all our joint Endeavours will be little enough to oppose the soft Insinuations of their secret Underminers, and the most impudent and bold Attacks of their avowed and open Adversaries. I am sorry we can date the mighty Growth and Progress of these Mischiefs within the Compass of so few Years, when we were hoping still for better Things. But let this evil State provoke us to a greater Care and Zeal in the Defence of Vertue and Religion, for the future.

You must all of you help to make this ugly Digression pertinent and useful, by taking all imaginable Care to breed up a Generation better than the present, and such as may do these

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these wicked Days all the Disgrace and Shame they can, by a most firm adherence to the Christian Faith, by a lively Sense of Virtue and Religion in the Soul, made manifest by a most Virtuous and Religious outward Practice.

I have done, you see, an unusual Thing, in fixing a Preface to a Sermon, but it was to make the Sermon more yours than any ones else ; and if the Sermon be better read for the Sake of the Preface, or if the Preface gain its end without the Sermon, I shall obtain the Point I aim at, and will answer for the absurdity or newness of the Method. You know I am every way your Debtor in Religious Matters, and I assure you I am otherwise,

Your Affectionate

Humble Servant,

W. Fleetwood.

P R O -

PROVERBS xiii. 24.

*He that spareth the rod hateth his son :
but he that loveth him, chasteneth
him betimes.*

THE Education of Children is, and hath always been accounted, a thing of such Importance, that all who have at any time discoursed or written of Government, have found themselves obliged to dwell particularly on that Subject. *Aristotle* thinks it a matter of such moment, that he positively determines it ought not to be left to the Parents choice ; but that the Publick (whose especially the Children are) should be entrusted only with that Charge : and *Plato* lays down such severe Rules, that 'tis a question whether they were ever practicable, or only fitted to his fancied *Commonwealth*. And indeed, considering that they are the Seed of Empires, Kingdoms, Corporations, and Families, and that the Good and Wellfare of them all, depends entirely on them, there can't be too much care employed about their bringing up : there are so many

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hazards from the sensible and tender dispositions of these nice Plants, from noxious Airs, inclement Seasons, and their own natural Luxuriancy, that it requires a great deal of skill to cultivate them as they should, and as they well deserve. And it is with this prospect (and a larger one besides, the World to come) that the Spirit of God hath inserted so many positive Commands, and so many wise Rules of training Children up, into the Holy Scriptures. For though *One* were enough, when found there, to make it our Duty, yet there are *Many* to enforce it farther; and though the Spirit of God inspir'd a-like the Herdsman's Son, with *Solomon* the King's, and made them a-like infallible, in what they should deliver to the World, yet in compliance (may be) with our Weakness, and the fond Conceits we have of human Reason and Understanding, it is so contriv'd, that there are more Precepts concerning Childrens Education found in *Solomon* alone, than all the Scriptures else: that they who take no notice of the Inspiration, might yet be moved by the Authority of the greatest Wisdom, and the best Experience, and the thing however done. I am to confine my self to that of my Text, which is as comprehensive as any: and will,

First,

First, Explain the Terms of it ; And,
Secondly, Shew the Truth of the Propositions
contain'd therein ; And,
Lastly, Make what Application may be sea-
sonable and useful.

And, *First*, of the Terms. *To spare the Rod*,
in the first Clause, being oppos'd to *chastening*,
in the second ; by the *Rod* must needs be meant,
not only that particular Instrument of Punish-
ment, but every thing besides that may prove
the Means of our Correction and Amendment.
And so in *Job 33. 19. He is chastened with pain
upon his bed.* And so in *Psal. 69. 10. I wept,
and chastened my soul with fasting.* And so in
*Isa. 53. 5. The chastisement of our peace was on
him ;* by which is meant the Miseries, Afflictions,
Pains, and Torments that our Lord en-
dured both in Life and Death for our sakes :
and so in a great many other places. So that
by *Chastisement* is here intended every Instru-
ment of Correction, every Means of effecting
what we intend by chastising. And *to spare the
Rod*, is, not to use those Means, not to em-
ploy those Instruments for the correcting and
amending what we see amiss in Children, which

are proper to their Age, suited to their Dispositions, and proportion'd to their Faults ; whether it be Reproof and sharp Admonition, Restraint of Liberty, Disappointment of their Wills, or corporal Punishment : to do (in a word) whatever is necessary, convenient, or becoming the Children and the Parents in their respective circumstances, is *to chasten*, and to neglect the doing it, is *to spare the Rod*. Let us see in the next place, what it is to love and hate one's Son, which are the rest of the Terms.

By *loving* and by *hating* is not here meant the exerting actually those Passions in the Heart, for then the Text would be untrue : it is by no means likely that an indulgent Parent sparing of his Child, should actually hate it in his Heart, or that the punishing it should be the Effect or Sign of natural Love, for the contrary to this, is mostly true ; the Sparing it is the Fruits of natural Fondness and Affection, and the Correcting it, is not the choice of the Heart, but the effects of a Necessity impos'd by Prudence and Consideration, and Hopes and Fears of what may come to pass. By *loving* and by *hating* therefore is to be understood, the acting agreeably to the *Reason*, and not the *Blindness* of those Passions ; the producing such effects as
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are in God's Accounts, and wise Mens too, and in our own when freed from partial Prejudices, the Consequence and Fruits of Love and Hatred acting regularly; such as are commonly esteemed the Effects of those two Causes, whether they indeed proceed from them or no: So that to love and hate ones Children, is to behave ones self so towards them, that they and others may be convinc'd we love or hate them, by such Fruits as reasonably and ordinarily are the Products of those two Passions, whether those Passions actually possess the Heart or no, of which we can convince none but our selves.

From the Terms thus explain'd, it will not be difficult, to shew, in the *second Place*, the Truth of the two Propositions, how and in what Sense he may be said to *hate* his Son, that spares the Chastisement of him, and how he *loves* him who chastiseth him betimes: For if we are to reckon of Love and Hatred by the Effects, then it is easie to discern when Parents hate their Children, namely, when either through Neglect or Fondness they permit them to enter on at first, or afterwards continue in such Courses, as will bring them to inevitable Ruine; when by their want of
Care,

Care, Instruction, or Correction, those Children fall into such Miseries, as the utmost Hatred of their most profest inveterate Enemies, could neither wish nor make them greater; whatever Love there may be at the bottom. What signifies the crowning of a Victim with a Garland, when it is still drest up to Death? That Mother is as much a Murtheress who stifles her Child in a Bed of Roses, as she that does it with a Pillow-bear. The End and Mischief is as great, tho' the Means and Instrument be not the same. And where two Causes will produce the same Effect, with equal Certainty, 'tis no great Matter which of them it is, nor whether you give it a hard or gentle Name. It is all one as if a Parent truly hated his Child, if through his Default, he fall into those Evils, which will naturally work his Mischief or Undoing; that Fault has the same effect that downright Hatred would have had. And then for the *Will*, tho' he can't be said to *will* downright the Evil of his Children, yet if he will the Means which have a natural tendency to produce that End, he is understood, in the Accounts of Reason, to will the End, and to be guilty of the Evil in a great Degree. And so we are said to will

a great many things in Scripture, not that we will them properly, but that we do those things, from whence the others naturally and necessarily follow. So God expostulates, in *Ezek.* 18. 31. and 33. 11. *Why will ye die, O house of Israel !* Not that the *Israelites* will'd or desired to die, for that's a thing incredible, if not impossible, in the hardest Sense of that Word, but that they willed such things, as would unavoidably bring that Death, and most inevitably ruine them. So in *Psal.* 106. 24. *Yea they despised that pleasant land.* Not that they despised or rejected the Land of *Canaan* it self, but rejecting the only Means God had appointed to bring them thither, which were Faith and Trust in him, and Patience and Obedience to his Laws, they are said to despise the Land it self. So in *Pro.* 17. 19. *He that exalteth his gate seeketh destruction, i. e.* He that liveth above his Fortune and Condition, or that openeth wide the Flood-Gates to Iniquity, seeketh Destruction ; the meaning is, that such a One shall find Destruction, he is as One that seeks and makes Inquiry after it, and he shall surely find it. So that Men are not charged with the Mischiefs only they intend directly, but with such also as are like

to follow whether they intend them or not, nay, tho' they should intend the contrary. He who takes the natural and ready Means to any End, is strongly guilty of the evil Consequence, altho' he should not only *not* design that End and Consequence, but hope and wish it might not come to pass; because neither Hopes, nor Wishes, nor Designs can hinder natural or moral Causes from producing natural and moral Effects. But neither is it only so in acting, but in permitting also; he is said, upon the same Account and Reason, to be guilty of the Evils that ensue, whose Duty it was, and in whose Power it was, to have prevented them, but did not: It were cruel and unjust, to charge a Man with all the Evils he should by Duty prevent, but could not, for want of Power: And it is not always reasonable, to charge a Man with the Evils he could by his Power have prevented, but did not, because he was not oblig'd in Duty; because the Signification of Power, in such a Case, is to be determin'd by the convenience of Time, and Place, and Person, and a great many other Circumstances of which a Man is only able to judge himself: But where Power and Duty meet together, there the Obligation

gation is unquestionable, and the Neglect of doing what we should and could is inexcusable. The Application of these Rules to the Case in Hand, is, I think, as evident as the Reason of those Rules. It is plain from the Light of Nature, and the use of Reason, as well as God's Determination in Scripture, that a Parent is oblig'd to educate his Children in the best, and most religious Manner possible, to instruct them in all that's Good, and warn them of all that's Evil; and it is as plain from the corruption of our Nature, the perverseness of our Wills, and from lamentable Experience, that unless this Care be taken, Children will unavoidably be ruin'd; and therefore he who neglects this Education, which he might and should look after, is properly enough said to undo his Children; and as he who should designedly ruine his own Children, would deservedly be said to hate them, so may he also, who neglects their Education, if such Neglect be the natural and ready Way to Ruine, though he don't design that Ruine, and though that Neglect do not proceed from Hatred, yet he is said, and properly enough, both to undoe and hate them,

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Now the Evils that proceed from a careless, or from bad Education, from want of good Instruction, of Reproof, Restraint, or of due Chastisement in any Kind, are Infinite and Pernicious, they are Numberless, and they are Intolerable. I believe it were hard to reckon up any considerable Calamity that has befallen a Kingdom, City, Family, or private Person, but might be justly charg'd upon this Head in some Measure.

The Reasoning of *Plato* is both just and excellent upon the Education of *Cyrus* and his Son *Cambyfes*, *Darius* and his Son *Xerxes*, and the following Kings of *Persia*, and shews the exact and perfect Correspondence betwixt the Ways of bringing up those Princes, and the Quality and Fortune of their Government and Kingdoms whilst they liv'd.

Cyrus having been brought up still in painful and laborious Exercises, and in a handsome kind of Equality of almost all Things betwixt himself and his Companions, his Reign was full of Glory and Success, and every thing that's Good and Laudable. But whilst himself was reaping Palms and Crowns of Victory, he left the Education of his Son to the Ladies who

who brought him up in the luxurious softness of the *Medes*, where no body durst speak a word of Truth or Honesty, for fear of wounding his Ears, which were us'd to nothing but to compliment and flattery. And hence it came, that the Reign and Government of this soft Prince was full as Infamous and Unfortunate both to himself and People as that of his brave Father had been Glorious, Wise, and Happy, unto both. *Darius Hystaspes* afterwards ascended the Throne, and as his Education had not been in the Delights of a Court, but Hard, and Rough, in Labours and Fatigues, so his Reign resembled in a Manner that of *Cyrus*, both for Glory and for Conquest: But whilst he and his Compeers were spreading every where the *Persian* Honour by their Gallantry and brave Atchievements, *Xerxes*, his Son, was left in Womens Hands, and from them had just such another Education as *Cambyfes* had, and reigned accordingly, leaving where'er he came, the shameful Marks of a prodigious Power put into the Hands of an ambitious Mad-man.

Darius was indeed a great deal more to blame than *Cyrus*, because he avail'd not himself of so notorious an Example of Miscarriage,

nor procur'd a better Education for his Son ; but that's not the only Use that we may make of these great Instances, one cannot choose but see, and lament too, that the Fate and Fortune of great Empires, the Wellfare and the Ruine of so many Hundred Thousands should depend upon the Care and the Neglect of a Parent, upon the Improvement or the Sottishness of one Body. But this would not touch us so near we think, if it were not also true in lesser Matters, and as fatal to private Families. The good or evil Education of Children, does not only affect themselves, but all the Stock and Kindred more or less ; there is hardly any body so inconsiderable, but some body may be bettered, and some body prejudiced by him ; there is no body stands so single and remote, but if he falls, there is some one hurt besides himself, directly or indirectly : which as it is a Motive to induce every Relation to see after the Improvement of Children, as it falls in their Way, so it is a special Argument to Parents, to attend more heedfully to the well educating of their Children, because the Wellfare and the Prejudice of so many other People does in a great Measure depend thereon. But supposing the Evil were single, that neither Commonwealth,

wealth, nor Family, nor Parent were endamaged (as they all are) by want of Education, yet the Evils that befall the Children, are so intolerably many, and pernicious both to Soul and Body, that those may well be said *to hate them*, that do not, when they might and should, prevent them.

Can we see a Man that has wholly renounc'd to Truth and good Faith, so entirely possess'd with the Spirit of Falsehood, Lying and Deceit, that one knows not how to believe a Word he says, nor how to trust him with the least Concern? Can we see a Man so ignorant of God and Goodness, of Religion and his Duty, and of all Things Spiritual, that one would think he were newly born into the World, and had not yet attained the Use of Reason, nor indeed the Use of Speech, and Language; and another so exceeding skilful in those Matters, and of so sharp a Wit and penetrating Judgment, that he knows very well that there is no such thing as God and Soul, or any thing but gross substantial Matter, modify'd with great variety? Can we hear another talk so loudly, and so frequently of God, that his Mouth is fill'd with nothing else, and yet at last it should be all in his Dishonour
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and Defiance, in wounding Oaths, in raging Blasphemies, and dreadful Imprecations, without Temptation, without Pleasure, without Profit ; and at last without his Knowledge and Design ? Can we see another vers'd in all the Species of Intemperance, practis'd in all the Arts of Luxury and Wantonness, and devoted wholly to excess, a perfect Slave to his voracious Appetite, and whose heart and Soul is in his Dish ? Another so intoxicated with the Love of Drink, that if 'twere possible to drown himself, he would, devoting both the Day and Night to that excess, having no other Business, nor other Pleasure and Diversion than Intemperance, neglecting all Concerns, forgetting all his Duty both to God and Man, a Reproach to Nature, Scandal to Religion, Useless to all the ends and purposes of living ; and not only so, but by his bad Example, and the cursed Consequences of those Courses, ruinous to himself and Family, and a most pernicious Creature to the Commonwealth. And another so enfeebled by his Lusts, so debilitated both in Soul and Body, by his exorbitant Indulgence to those brutal Longings, that he is scarce the Shadow of a Man ; dull of Apprehension, weak in Imagination, failing in Memory, and moap'd
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in his Understanding. In a word, as impotent of Mind as Body, and whose Soul is as loose about him as his Limbs.

Can one see, I say, these, and a thousand other Evils and Disorders, with all their ugly Consequences, reign and rage about the World continually, and know at the same time they are the natural Consequences of a loose and careless Education, and might in a great measure, have been prevented by Advice, Restraint, and punishing betimes; can one see and know this, and doubt at the same time, whether our Parents hated us or no, who should and could, but would not save us from them? What could our greatest Enemy have done besides? He would have taken the same courses; for one that he exercises as he did *Job*, with Sorrows and Afflictions, he ruins a thousand by Indulgences; it is the End he aims at, which is our destruction, and 'tis no matter by what means he comes about it. If *Eutrapelus's* Presents are sure to prove as fatal to a weak Mind, as a Dagger in a Man's Heart, or a Glass of Poyson in his Bowels, what signifie the shews of Love, and the Pretence of Friendship, which prove as deadly as the Assaults of open Enmity? What signifies it, that the Child is the
Delight

Delight of its Parents Eyes, and the Idol of their Hearts; the perpetual Object of their Thoughts, and the perpetual Theme of their Discourse, that they discern new Beauties daily in it, secret Charms, and Excellencies undiscoverable to all the World besides; hear Musick in his Voice, and Wit in every Word, and Grace and Comeliness in every Action. If Care be not taken to render him as excellent indeed and to himself, and as amiable to others, by Vertue, Goodness, Sweetness and Humanity, as he is to them by an abused Fancy. All other Demonstrations are but Demonstrations of their own Fondness to, and Love of their own self, and end in their own Complacence and Delight. If you would convince another of your Love, it is *he* that must feel the effects of it, in and upon himself, as well as you. It is otherwise like the Charity of good Words, the wishing of Alms, and Food, and Raiment, with which a Man may be starv'd with Cold and Hunger. The Love that terminates in Fondness, and the little trifling (if no worse) effects of that, can no more properly be called the Love of ones Children, than the bidding the hungry be filled, the thirsty be satisfied, and the naked be cloathed, without supplying

plying those Necessities, can be call'd *relieving them*. But the Parallel will hold no farther, for he that relieves not the distressed, does them at least no harm or injury; whereas the Parent that with all this dotage, takes not care to educate his Children virtuously and well, does them the greatest injury and mischief in the World; mispends the only proper time and season of their Improvement, deprives them of all the Advantages and Opportunities of becoming useful to the Publick, a Support to the Family, a comfortable Relation, and happy People themselves: and not only so, but exposes them defenceless, destitute and naked to abundance of Hazards and Temptations; to a contagious Air in the most sensible and tender Age; to a vicious World, with vicious Inclinations; to combat with those Foes, with whom our Hearts do naturally conspire; to meet those Dangers we rejoyce to run into; to vanquish those Temptations which we seek and hunt for; to resist those evils we had rather should prevail than be subdu'd; to be left, in a word, to our selves, to the Naughtiness of our own Hearts, and the Dictates of unruly heedless Nature, to engage with so many Sins, and so many Snares, as are commonly a match sufficient for the greatest Care, and greatest

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Watchfulness, and greatest Prudence, together with the ordinary Supplies of God's Grace, is to be ruin'd and undone without peradventure. And if these are not true effects of Hatred, if these are not the Tokens of the greatest Ill-will, and the most improv'd refin'd Malice, we are yet to learn what those Words mean. And this I hope is so evident from the sense of the Thing, from the reason of the Words, and from the experience of the World, that there is little occasion to press you with the Authority of the Text, and to insist upon it, that 'tis King Solomon inspir'd by God that says, *That he that spareth the Rod, hateth his Son.* It will be somewhat clearer by considering the other Clause in the Text, and seeing what are the effects of Love, which is early Chastisement. *He that loveth his Son, chasteneth him betimes.*

I have already made appear, that Love and Hatred, in these cases, can only be securely judg'd of by the Effects; not by the Feelings, Motions, and Affections of the Parents Heart, but by the Fruits and Consequences, of which the Children must be sensible themselves, and all the World be Judges. For the ground of all this mischief is, that Parents commonly consult with no body but themselves, to know if they love their Children, and finding quickly
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by the Reply their Hearts make, that they love them; as they love their Eyes; they rest contented with the Answer, and use them indeed as tenderly; whereas they should enquire of Strangers and of wise Men, impartial and unprejudic'd; they should take their Informations from Reason and good Sense, from the Experience of the Aged, and such as study more particularly this Affair; and they would shew them, by the effects alone, whether they lov'd or no: the Marks and Tokens of Affection would be visible in Manners and Instruction, beyond the Power of being deceived; and if this be too much, let them learn the Truth, from the Pity of some, and the Reproach of others, and from the common Rumours of the Neighbourhood. Every body but themselves, will tell them, that Love of Children must appear by its Effects and Fruits, and no other thing can possibly convince another of that Love, though they themselves are never so perswaded that they do, and to confirm it could be content to die. But of this enough already, and also what it is to chasten; it remains that I say a word or two of the proper Season, and that is *betimes*; *he that loveth him chasteneth him betimes*; either betimes with respect to his Age, or with respect to his Faults.

First, with respect to his Age. It is, in every thing, of great Importance, how we begin, what Grounds we lay, and what Foundation tis we build upon: if this be not right, the rest is but Time and Pains mispent, and will end in Loss and Disappointment. It is as a Man that sets out false, every step that he proceeds, is so much out of his way, and he must return and begin again. And so it is with the Journeyings of Life; if in our early Youth we set out false, fall into evil Practices, or be corrupted with pernicious Maxims, it is either a great chance that we never see our Errour at all, but blindly still proceed at all adventure; or if we do, we find our selves constrain'd to begin a-new, to return to the place from whence we first set out, to our intollerable trouble and vexation. What a deal of human Life is spent, not in weaving a new web, but in unravelling the old; not in learning new Lessons of Truth and Vertue, but in unlearning those of Vice and Falshood; in forgetting of evil Principles, and laying down old Prejudices; in stripping our selves of our accusom'd Habits, in parting with our old Acquaintances, in forsaking our old Friends, and in a manner tearing out our Vitals, and rending of our Hearts alunder: all which might, in
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great measure, be prevented, by an early Seasoning in the ways of Goodness. It was in prospect of this, that one of the Ancients would have Children accusom'd to love and praise with delight all vertuous Actions, and detest all Vices, even before they attain'd the Use of Reason, he would have them constantly observe, know them compleatly, and form in their Minds perfect Idea's of them ; and observing that Children are first of all affected with the Sense of Pleasure and of Pain, he would have them used, though never so little and young, to take or think there is no Pleasure but in Goodness, Vertue, Temperance, Justice, and the like ; nor feel or think there is any great Pain but in those things that are truly evil, Vice and Sin. The thing is carried certainly too high, and the Lesson too refin'd and subtil to be put in practice : but the thing he means is this ; that the Preventions and Prepossessions of Vertue, Goodness, and Religion, should answer at least the Prejudices of our natural Corruption, and that Propensity and Inclination to Folly and to Sin, we bring along with us into this World ; that the Artificial Principles of Education, might be of equal poise with our original Corruption, till the use of our Understanding bear down the Scale on
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the right side : and if it be better to prevent, than cure an Evil, to save from Danger, than deliver out of it, then it is better to begin *betimes* with chastening of our Children, to make them wise at *our* expence, to let them know no Sin but by description ; to hinder them from making an Experiment so very unprofitable at best, and fatal in the Event, most commonly.

But, *Secondly*, *betimes* is also to be understood with respect to the Fault ; the first respecting Age, would, if 'twere possible, prevent the evil, this latter is to put a speedy stop to it, to hinder it from growing any farther ; the first Advice is, to take all care imaginable, that no corrupt or noxious Weeds should spring up, in that pure and tender Soil ; the second is to root them out *betimes*, if once they come ; so that, *to chasten betimes*, is to see, that Punishment do constantly attend the Crime, before it be forgotten, and before an evil habit be contracted by the frequent repetition of evil Acts.

First, Before it be forgotten ; as well that it may not appear to proceed from a delight in Punishment, or to be the effects of studied and deliberate Cruelty, as also that the Fault being fresh in Memory, the Justice and Reasonableness of the Infliction may the better appear, and make the deeper Impression on the Mind, and raise

raise the greater Averſation and Abhorrence of the Thing, that *Impunity* may not breed *Security* in Sin; and that Children may not argue as older People often do, that *because Sentence is not ſpeedily executed againſt an evil Work, therefore their Hearts ſhould be fully ſet in them, to do Evil.* 'Tis a falſe and vicious Way of Arguing, but *because 'tis obvious, natural, and too too eaſie,* it ſhould be ſilenc'd quickly, and convicted of its Falſehood; that it may not impoſe on them a ſecond Time.

But, *Laſtly*, and moſt eſpecially, for fear of evil Habits being contracted, the Dread of Punishment is the moſt natural Reſtraint upon the Mind, 'tis the moſt powerfull Motive to Obedience, the very Life of all Laws, and without which they would be but a dead Letter; and all the Reason in the World they ſhould be ſo; for who would obey againſt his Intereſt, or who would practice againſt his inclination, without fear? and who would fear without Punishment? according therefore to the Degrees of Impunity, which Men can find or fancy, will their Obedience to the Laws, or Diſobedience prove. And ſo it is, even in the ſmalleſt Matters that relate to Children, they naturally incline the wrong Way, and are kept ſtrait by forcible Coercion; the Dread of Punishment

ment is the Restraint that lies most powerfully upon them, 'tis the Consideration of that, that is their Motive to Obedience, and the Discouragement that keeps them from offending: and he that removes that Bar, lays them expos'd and open to every Danger and Temptation. But nothing does this more effectually, than suffering them to sin at first without Reproof and Punishment; this strangely lessens the Guilt and Horrour of their Faults within their own Minds, gives them Degrees of Confidence in Wickedness, and makes them think it no such hainous Matter, and venture on it frequently and freely, till it at last becomes habitual, and is rooted firmly in them: and then the Danger is a thousand times the greater, and the Pains of remedying all these Mischiefs infinitely more. So that allowing that they *must* some time or other root these Evils out, free them from the Bondage and Captivity of their Lusts and Passions, and rid them of all their bad and foolish Principles, and set them in the Ways of Virtue and Sobriety again, allowing, I say, that this *must* needs be done, that they cannot possibly be Safe or Happy without it, nay, that they must be miserable here and more than so hereafter. Allowing of all this, it is demonstrable, that it is not only a Piece of
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the greatest *Wisdom* to set about it betimes, but of the greatest *Mercy* and *Compassion* in the World, even in the Judgment of the tenderest and most pitying Mother. 'Tis like putting *one* to Death, to save a Hundred by the Terror of the Example, which may be Justice to the Offender, but is in truth a Kindness to the rest. If *one* Reproof and Admonition, will prevent the Occasion of twenty more, each one as sharp and terrible, it would be Cruelty to spare it. If an early restraint of undue Liberty, will prevent Licentiousness hereafter, which must be restrain'd with Chains and Dungeons, who would not think it a Mercy to be restrain'd betimes? It is better sure to break us of our Wills betimes, and to deny us our Satisfaction in small and trifling Things, before we can have set our Hearts upon them, than to let our Wills and Inclinations gather Strength, and our Affection settle and grow firm, and then begin to fall upon us; the one is only as the bending, the other as the breaking, of an Arm. A little Pain, and Trouble, and Uneasiness will serve at first to set us right again, when a Continuance in our Evil State, and a contracted Habit, will require a great deal of Patience, and put us to a great deal of Torment. A little Care and a little Strength,

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will serve to keep a young and tender Graft in uprightness and order, which if permitted to grow awry for some time, must suffer violence and great distortion, before it will be strait again. The older *we* grow in evil Practices and evil Maximes, the older *they* grow too, and take the faster hold, and root the deeper in us, and consequently are remov'd with greater difficulty. So that allowing, that there is an absolute Necessity of their being remov'd at length it is plain and manifest beyond denial, that it is not only better both for Parent and for Child, that it be done *betimes*, but that it is a Piece of Cruelty both in the one, and to the other, to deferr it, till the vicious Habit is contracted; and consequently that the Truth of the Proposition in the Text does visibly appear, *that he that loveth his Son chastneth him betimes*. And having done with that, I am now to make Application of what hath been said, and it shall be to the Parties here concern'd.

First, The Parent.

Secondly, The Children, and to both in short.

First, To the Parent. To shew you the necessity there is of bringing up your Children under an early and severe discipline, the Spirit calls the doing of it *Love*, which is a Term so fit and so expressive, that Nature seems to have approved.

appropriated it to Parents in such manner, that they are fond of the Name, even when they have not the Thing; they would be thought to love even when they don't, it looks so like their own, and what they should do: and the Neglect of this he calls *hatred*, a Term from which all Parents naturally abhor. But that you might not be deceived, and make your Judgments from the Passions and Affections of your own Hearts, he describes this Love and Hate by such Effects as are not usually the Products of those Passions in the Hearts of Parents; but such as are so in God's Accounts, and wise Mens, and Childrens themselves when they grow up to Years of Understanding; and therefore that you should not set the movings of your Hearts, and your own fond Opinions and conceits of Kindness, against the Reason, Judgment, and Experience of the whole World, and oftentimes your own: But freeing your selves as much as may be, from the Partialities of Nature, and your Parental Prejudices, deal with your own as freely and as wisely as you would with the Children of a Forreigner and Stranger, believing there is need of equal Care, and equal Rigour, in treating with your own as you can visibly discern there is, in treating with anothers. This is the only true and last-

ing Kindness you can do them ; all other Tokens of your Love, but that of good Discipline, will die with you, or may be taken from them by sundry Chances and Misfortunes. This is the only Treasure and Possession you can leave them, of which they cannot be depriv'd by Thieves and Robbers ; out of the Power of Chance, and above the Reach and Malice of the subtlest and most formidable Enemy. This alone, without any other Accession, often proves the Foundation of a lasting Happiness ; but every thing besides, without this, signifie at least nothing, but are most commonly the Instruments of greater Mischief, and the Occasions of greater falling. And though it can't be done without reluctancy and some uneasiness on both Parts, yet it must needs be done however : It is but like removing Knives and Instruments of Danger out of their Way, for fear of hurting them, notwithstanding all their cryings and impatience after them ; or like the administering severe Physick, to prevent a growing Sicknes, notwithstanding all their loathings and resistance : Your Fondness seldom hinders you from this, and yet severe and early Discipline, is but an equal crossing of their Wills, an exercising of their Patience, and applying as uneasie Remedies to Evils much more

more dangerous, and to effect a Good much more considerable than that of Health it self. It is not easie to determine how far Childrens Faults are chargeable upon their Parents; there are too many, and too intricate Circumstances to be consider'd, before one can decisively pronounce on such Matters: But neither of them are the safer for this Uncertainty and Doubt: The Children shall unquestionably suffer for their own Sins, and the Parents as unquestionably for their Neglect: They have both of them Guilt enough, and both of them shall have enough of Punishment; the one for not having done what they shou'd, the other for doing what they shou'd not. Not that after all the Care, and Discipline, and early Chastisement, the Parent is secure of the Event, but secure of himself, and his Design: He has done his Duty, and must leave the issue in the hands of God; he has taken the natural, ready, reasonable, and usual, and appointed Means, and if the Strength of Temptations, and the Violence of the Children's Passions, or the Perverseness of their Wills, obstruct and hinder these Means from attaining of their good End, he has freed his Soul; the Parent may be, after that sad and unfortunate, but has remov'd his Guilt and Punishment; and, *next to the effecting what*

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we would, is the satisfaction of having done what one should. And so much for Application to the Parent.

A word or two to the other Party, and I have done; and that, not to persuade you that Reproof, Restraint, and Punishment are things eligible, or no such grievous and uneasie States as they are fancied, for they are undoubtedly uneasie States, and just as bad as you experience them to be; there is no arguing against sense, or persuading against feeling: but that you would believe, since they proceed from People of the greatest Love and Tenderness, and sore against their Inclinations, that they are the most natural and necessary Means of effecting the greatest Good, and preventing the greatest Evils in the World, and so designed by those that do inflict them. It is true what St. Paul observes in another case, *Heb. 12. 11.* that *no chastisement for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous; nevertheless afterwards, it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of Righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby.* You cannot love Correction and Restraint, but when you shall hereafter see and feel the Effects of all this careful Discipline, in the Fear of God, in the Government of your Passions, in Temperance, in Chastity, in Patience under evils, in bearing Disappointments, in the Joys of Innocence,

cence, and the Comforts of a good Conscience ; then you will bless your Parents and Instructors, who by their Admonitions, seasonable Reproofs, and early Chastisements, delivered you from the Snares of Sin and Death, from the Plague of a guilty Mind, from an uneasie Remembrance of what is past, and a fearful looking for of Evils to come, which you will then desire to have avoided, though with the utmost Pain and Torment, and curse the Indulgence that prevented it. You will have other Notions and Opinions of the Love of Parents and Instructors than you now have ; and therefore, in the mean time, let the Reason, Wisdom, and Experience of all Ages convince you, that the Courses taken, to make you good and happy, are not only fit and suited to your Age, and Tempers, but necessary and unavoidable, tho' for the present they appear so grievous and unacceptable ; and therefore ben't so hasty and impatient under them, nor covet so to be deliver'd from them : be not so fond of immature Manhood, only because you think it is a State of Freedom from the Bondage of your Discipline. That Age has no such Charms in it as you imagine, and when aspir'd to so ambitiously, and so unseasonably, 'tis only to perfect your Destruction, and complete your Misery the sooner ; it is according

ing to the good or ill Improvement of this your Season of Discipline, that Manhood shall prove more or less comfortable: the Ground is now a cultivating, the Seed is now a sowing, that shall spring up to lasting Honour and Advantage, or to your lasting Shame and Ruine. And therefore though the Heats of Fancy, the Vigour of your springing Youth, and Fervour of Complexion, may suggest both strange and forward things, yet trust them not, nor listen to them. It is but like the Gaiety that springs up from the Fumes of New Wine, that warm and delight Men for a moment, but soon evaporate, and leave the Heart in greater Damps and Melancholy. You will quickly find the Mischiefs of forsaking Discipline, and all those gay Expectances will vanish, and conclude in lamentable Disappointments; but the trouble is, that then Repentance comes too late, the Time is irrecoverable, and the Evil is irreparable. And therefore, to conclude, learn to be wise in this your hour, the Wisdom at least, of suffering others to be wise and careful for you, in things of which you have as yet no Knowledge or Experience, and yet so necessary to you, that thereupon depends the Welfare and Felicity of all your Lives.

F I N I S.